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A LESSON PLAN Speaking (and writing) of Sports



To the Teacher

In this issue of *English Teaching Forum* (FORUM), you will find a series of pictures. As you look at them, you will see that they cover a wide range of sports and physical activities. Notice that the cover is also a sports picture. You can use these pictures for a variety of classroom activities. Almost all of the activities are easily adapted for small groups or pairs. You do not need to use all of the activities; choose what is most suitable for your teaching situation.

Activity 1

This is a sentence combining exercise. This is a good first activity to introduce the pictures because it provides some of the vocabulary students will need to talk about the pictures.

Put the short sentences on the blackboard, and ask the students to combine them into one sentence. Tell students that it's not necessary to use all of the words, but it is important to keep all of the information. Emphasize that there is often more than one good way to combine these sentences.

Sample

Here is an example you can share with the students to get them started:

These pictures are about physical activities.

Some of the pictures are of organized sports.

Some of the pictures are of people playing.

Possible sentence combinations:

- Some of these pictures are about sports, others are people playing, but they are all about physical activities.
- Although all these pictures show physical activities, some are of people playing, and others are of organized sports.
- This series of pictures shows both organized sports and people playing.

Exercise

- A. [see the cover photo] This picture shows an experienced surfer.
The wave is as large as a wall of water.
The surfer is riding a wave.
- B. It's summertime in the city.
There are a lot of people on the street.
People are watching a stickball game.
- C. Stickball is an urban ball game.
Stickball is played on city streets.
Stickball is not a professional sport.
- D. The team is playing lacrosse.
Lacrosse is a game of Native American origin.
- E. The player is in front of the net.
The player is defending the goal.
- F. Lacrosse is played with two teams.
Lacrosse is a popular university sport.
- G. There are two girls on the swing.
The girls are playing.
The swing is on a playground.
- H. The swing is made of rubber.
The swing is an old tire.



- I. There are two swings in the picture.
The girls are playing on one swing.
- J. The team is playing basketball.
One of the team members has prosthetic legs.
- K. The player with prosthetic legs is running down the court.
The player is running with his team.
- L. The girls are dressed in blue.
The girls are wearing white skates.
The girls are ice skating.
- M. The girls are holding hands.
The girls are at an ice rink.
The girls are spinning around on the ice.

Activity 2

The following activity uses all of the pictures and provides structured writing practice.

Tell the students to look at the pictures and think about them and then to write answers to the following questions (you can put the questions on the blackboard). For a lower level class, you might want to go through the questions orally first, and then follow with the writing assignment.

- 1. Which picture do you like best? Why?
- 2. Which picture do you think is the most colorful? Why?
- 3. Which picture do you think is the most exotic? Why?
- 4. Which picture do you think is the most interesting? Why?
- 5. Which picture do you think is the most artistic? Why?
- 6. Which picture is the least interesting to you? Why?
- 7. What is the overall theme of these pictures? Explain your answer.



Activity 3

The following writing activities are suitable for any one of the pictures in this issue of FORUM. You can put the following questions on the blackboard for the students to copy and then answer in writing. This is an intermediate-level task, and, of course, it can also be done orally.

Tell the students: Choose a picture and look at it carefully. Imagine that you are in this picture, and then answer the following questions:

1. What is the most interesting part of the picture to you? Why do you think so?
2. In this picture, what would you be doing? If you would not want to be in the picture, explain why.
3. Where do you think this picture was taken, and why do you think so?
4. How would you title this picture?

Tell the students: Choose a picture and look at it carefully. Make a list of words that would be useful for describing this picture. You can also work with a partner to see who can make the longest list.

After students have finished their lists of words, ask them to do one or both of the following activities.

1. Write a paragraph describing the picture, using as many of the words from your list as you can.
2. Write a paragraph telling the story of the people in the picture. You can create as many details as you wish.



Activity 4

This activity uses all of the pictures, plus the cover of the magazine. If you have several copies of the magazine, each small group can have a copy to work with. If you have only one copy, take out the pictures and tape them to the blackboard, or lay them out on a table, so that students can go to the pictures and look closely at them. Number the pictures from 1-6.

Give the students time to look at the pictures and make any comments about them that they wish. On the blackboard, or on pieces of paper (if doing this as a small group activity), have the students draw a chart like the one shown below. Then tell the students to look at the six pictures and fill out the chart by checking the boxes that indicate what they see in each picture. Some items are very obvious, but some require judgments. Students will need to be ready to explain their choices. Remind them to base decisions on what can be seen in the picture.

After filling out the chart, students can either present the information orally, or use it as the basis for writing sentences or a short paragraph. The type of written activity will depend on the level of your students.

Picture 1										
Picture 2										
Picture 3										
Picture 4										
Picture 5										
Picture 6										
	Team Activity	Individual Activity	Adults	Children	Indoor	Outdoor	Uniforms	Cold Weather	Warm Weather	Sports Equipment

Follow-on Activity

This is a good activity to do in pairs, as well as individually. It is also a good long-term project, as it might take some time for students to collect suitable pictures. Tell the students to select a series of pictures on a theme or topic of their choice and to create a chart for them. The students should make up their own categories, suitable for the pictures they find. Each student should have a minimum of five pictures, and at least five categories on the chart. Encourage students to be creative in their choice of topic and in the categories they create. The photos and charts can then be presented orally or posted on a bulletin board.



Activity 5

The following are questions you can use to start a class discussion. Or you could divide the class into groups and give each group one question to discuss.

1. How would you define play? How would you define sport? Give some examples of each.
2. Why is play/sport important?
3. What are some popular sports in your country? Discuss whether they are team sports or individual sports, and talk about the differences between professional and amateur sports.
4. What role do physical activities and sports play in schools?
5. When you were a child, what were some of your favorite games, sports, or physical activities? Explain.
6. What is your favorite game, sport, or physical activity now? Explain.

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